

British Aggregates Association

Press Notice 1st July 2011 - Immediate.

BAA WARNS AGAINST COMMITTING NEW CASH FROM LEVY

The BAA has written to the Minerals Products Association to voice its concern about the MPA campaign for a new Community Fund based on the existing Aggregates Levy.

BAA director Robert Durward;

“Although we are in favour of industry led measures to support our neighbours, the MPA's timing is unfortunate. Our legal challenge to the Levy is now approaching its conclusion and the last two hearings have been very much in our favour. Setting up a new community fund based on a levy which may be about to disappear is something that the industry could well do without. Not only could we end up with an additional fund, with no revenue and various groups queued up for cash, but politicians would inevitably come between us and those we were trying to help.”

The BAA is also disappointed that the MPA launched its campaign without first consulting SME companies, many of which are struggling to survive. Quarry operators already pay more than their fair share in taxes and levies. The industry provides an essential service and a great deal of rural employment. Although there is no particular environmental problem with quarries, initiatives of this kind often create the wrong impression. The MPA's proposals also fail to take account of the regional variations of the original Aggregates Levy Sustainability Fund.

ENDS

Notes for editors

1. A copy of MPA press release no. 20 dated 23 June is attached
2. MPA Executive Director Public Policy 2 June 2011; *Simon van der Byl attended the launch of the Government's "UK National Ecosystem Assessment" report, at which Caroline Spelman MP, Secretary of State at DEFRA, and Oliver Letwin MP, the Minister for Government Policy, were present and spoke. The launch was chaired by Lord Selborne, who also chairs "Living with Environment Change", a Government initiative. In the course of the Q&A session, Simon asked the panel of learned professors, with Caroline Spelman still present, whether they would support the MPA 'Mark 2' version of the ALSF (proposals were sent to Richard Benyon in May), which he described in broad detail. There was universal support for the concept and an acknowledgement from the Secretary of State that its objectives were very worthy.*
3. MPA lobbying intensifies www.mineralproducts.org/mpa-newsletter/june2011/headlines-082.php#alsfm2

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